

North Carolina Cost Share Programs Review Summary
(February 2019)

County	<u>Robeson</u>	Date of Previous Review/Report	<u></u>
District Staff Name(s)	<u>Joanna McPhatter, Lucas Baxley</u>	Date	<u>2/5/2019</u>
NRCS Staff Name(s)	<u></u>		
Division Representative(s)	<u>Lisa Fine, Kristina Fischer</u>		
Additional Participants	<u></u>		

Questions	Division Findings				Division Comments	District Plan of Action Required		SWCD Plan of Action	Proposed Timeline for Implementation	Division Response to Plan of Action (date)
	Commendation	Recommendation	Corrective Action	No Concerns/ Not Applicable		Yes	No			
Section 1: Application Procedures and Tracking Progress (BMP Implementation and Payments) Questions in this section focus on how the district advertises the program, how applications are developed, how contracts are developed, how funds are tracked and how the board approves each.										
How/when are the district board meetings scheduled?				X	District standing date is the first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 a.m. Changes are given 2 weeks’ notice.		X			
How do you notify the public of the board meeting schedule? Does it adhere to the Open Meetings Law?				X	Posted on district door, at FSA and posted by county website calendar. Yes, it adheres to OML.		X			

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Please describe the district's process for providing assistance to applicants by assessing resource concerns to determine if a BMP is "needed and feasible" and then developing the conservation plan.				X	Most people call or come in to request help. They don't necessarily know what they need so Lucas goes out to assess the resource concern. Conservation plans are done in cases without cost share. After the assessment is completed a conservation plan may be created.		X			
Does the district provide technical assistance without cost share funds?				X	Yes, no till, cover crop, pasture system and drain tiles that are not always cost shared. These are outside of normal funding times or no funds available.		X			
What type of technical assistance is provided without cost share funds?				X	See above		X			
Are applications, contracts and requests for payments reviewed and approved by the Board as a separate action item?				X	Yes.		X			
Are application, contracts and requests for payments motions/decisions recorded in the board minutes?				X	Yes.		X			
Has your district delegated signature authority for requests for payments to be approved outside of board meetings? How are they recorded in your board meeting minutes?				X	Yes. Yes, the RFPs that were signed outside the board meetings were recorded in the minutes.		X			
Applicants are limited when applying for incentive BMPs. How does your district track applicants so they do not go over the practice caps and to be sure they haven't already "adopted" the practice?	X				The district has a sheet from the beginning of time to check applicants on and all the previous years contracts too. Conservation tillage and cover crop lists are kept here. No till ledgers		X			


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					have all the past applicants on them. Commendation – the division commends your all-inclusive record keeping system.					
If multiple partners farm together, how does the district track individual applicants as one operation or entity?				X	See above plus board members and staff know all the farmers in the county. Can also check FSA if there is ever a question.		X			
At what point in the application process does the district develop the contract? (After Ranking, After Application Approved?) Describe this process.				X	Applicant comes in the office to request BMP, application is taken then a site visit is completed, rank it, make up a conservation plan, cost estimates on contract then taken to board for approval, once approved its' entered into CS2 and then after division approval the applicant is notified.		X			
Describe how the district reviews the contract with the applicant. Do you explain that work cannot begin until the contract is approved by the division?				X	Once everything is approved in CS2 a packet is put together and either mailed to them or Lucas goes in person to give it to them. Lucas goes over in person. He will call them to remind them that dates are coming up.		X			
What procedures do you follow for notifying the applicant that work can begin?		X			Lucas calls them to give them the approval. The division recommends the district send a letter including a timeline for starting and completing the project along with the 1/3 date.	X		Send letter of approval with timeline to begin project.	Immediately	Plan of Action accepted.


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Describe the district/board's procedure for approving supervisor contracts.				X	District doesn't have any current ones. Is aware of the procedures for supervisor contracts.		X			
Is it documented in the Board minutes that the supervisor abstained from discussing his/her own contract and from voting?				X	There were no supervisor contracts in recent past but district is aware.		X			
Is each contract reviewed in detail with the board before approval? Do you project CS2?	X				District has spreadsheet they take to board meeting for each program. If any questions come up the staff can get the files to look at. Funds are discussed at the meeting as well since it's on the same spreadsheet. Commendation – color coded spreadsheet with status of contracts in different colors, funding balance at top and contract details.		X			
What information do you provide the applicant?				X	Conservation plan, maps, soils report, job sheets, standards, contracting information, approval.		X			
What technical assistance do you provide during the BMP installation process to ensure the BMP is installed correctly and by the contract deadline?				X	Lucas is on site after work is done. If a well Lucas will be on site for pictures etc... He is available for questions if need be but does not get involved in actual work.		X			
How do you track the Commission's interim performance milestone? One-third of the work must be completed within 12 months of division approval. Are you using CS2?				X	The district uses their spreadsheet and knows about CS2.		X			


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If 1/3 of the work has not been completed within 12 months and the cooperators requests additional time, is the district recording 6-month extensions in the board minutes?	X				Yes, I reviewed the minutes where it was documented. Commendation: documentation allowed us to locate where in the minutes that this was handled and it was stated, a motion made and voted on and recorded.		X			
What documentation do you include in the contract file that certifies that the BMP was inspected and is installed to the standards?				X	Photos, conservation 6 notes are used to make notes.		X			
Are BMPs measured then certified before the request for payment is approved? How is this documented?				X	The 6 notes document this certification and then the RFP is created from that.		X			
Section 2: Spot Checks and Compliance Issues Questions in this section focus on how the district reviews BMPs for compliance and how maintenance and/or non-compliance issues are addressed.										
Are all BMPs under the waste management category spot checked for the first five years after installation? This applies to all farms that fall under the thresholds that are regulated by DWR.				X	District knows who they need to add to the spot checks. Whatever wasn't pulled randomly the district adds in.		X			
How does the district notify the NRCS area office or division to conduct spot checks for contracts that need to be spot checked by someone outside of the district? (Refer to Spot Check Policy)				X	Have not had any recent supervisor or other contracts.		X			


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How does your district notify individuals that have BMPs that are out of compliance or need maintenance? (Refer to Non-Compliance Policy)				X	Letter goes to cooperators or Lucas talks to them in person if he knows them. District gave cooperator information on how to pay back and funds have been returned to the division.		X			
How are supervisors notified of BMPs that are out of compliance or need maintenance at any time throughout the year?				X	Lucas let the board know that the cooperator was out of compliance in the most recent instance.		X			
Does the district provide a written notice that the BMP must be repaired or re-implemented within 30 working days? (Vegetative practices have to be reestablished within one calendar year.) Is a copy of the notification kept in the contract file?				X	See above. Yes, copies of documentation or minutes are kept.		x			
If the BMP was not repaired or re-implemented, was repayment requested? Please provide documentation: contract numbers and/or names.				X	Yes, and division received the funds.		X			
Is the district notifying the division of non-compliance and resolutions?				X	Yes. Notice sent with spot checks.		X			
Section 3: Record Keeping Questions in this section focus on how funds are managed and accounted for, maintaining proper design and job approval authority, as well as disclosure forms.										
Do you use the CS2 reports to show the board available program funds, encumbrances and expenditures?				X	No, but the district spreadsheet has this information on it.		X			
How are technical assistance and operating funds tracked? Are they audited? What is the date of the last audit? Who performed the audit?			X		Funds go to the county. Jo keeps a sheet to track operating funds but county gets the funds. Corrective Action - A request was made for a	X				Plan of Action has been completed with


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					copy of the audit that is done by the county or a memo from the County Finance Officer stating that the state cost share funds were audited and found to be OK. That has not been received yet.					receipt of audit statement.
Who in the office does work for Cost Share Programs?				X	Lucas Baxley		X			
Is proper job approval authority (JAA) documented for each technical and cost share position? Please provide a copy of the latest approved JAA. (Print a copy of what is in the data base. Does it match the district's version?)				X	I have his JAA for wells/pumps in my office. He is in the process of getting JAA for some other practices – at NRCS waiting.		X			


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Section 4: Contract Reviews and Site Visits Below is a list of the contracts the division reviewed. Spot checks were also conducted. Notes include recommendations and/or corrective action for contract files as well as the BMP. Contracts/BMPs are listed by contract number.										
Contract Number: 78-2017-407 Applicant Name: Herbert Young BMP: cropland conversion to grass 			X		No concerns with contract file. Corrective Action – it appears the field is being used as a dog training run which is outside the “intended use” of agriculture. The field should be returned to just grass or it can be paid back to the state in full for the remainder of its maintenance period starting when we found it out of compliance.	X		I have spoken with the producer and he has chosen to pay back the prorated amount for the acres that are “out of compliance”.		A copy of the letter that was sent to the cooperator was received. The refund check has been received by the division.

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Contract Number: 78-2014-012 Applicant Name: Heath Sealey BMP: cropland conversion to trees 				X	No concerns with contract file. Changes to species planted should have been noted and the division noticed on them. Please make sure that happens with future contracts. Shrubs and trees still functioning as needed.		X			


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<div>Contract Number: 78-2013-007</div> <div>Applicant Name: Richard Hayes</div> <div>BMP: prescribed grazing, fencing, tanks, well</div> <div></div>				X	<div>No concerns with contract file.</div> <div>No concerns with BMP.</div>		X			

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<div>Contract Number: 78-2018-800</div> <div>Applicant Name: Justin Cummings</div> <div>BMP: AgWRAP well</div> <div></div>				X	<div>No concerns with contract file.</div> <div>No concerns with BMP.</div>		X			

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<div>Contract Number: 78-2011-012</div> <div>Applicant Name: Susan Thompson</div> <div>BMP: cropland conversion to grass</div> <div></div>				X	<div>No concerns with contract file.</div> <div>No concerns with BMP.</div>		X			

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<div>Contract Number: 78-2015-025 Applicant Name: Barney Locklear BMP: pasture renovation</div> <div></div>				X	No concerns with contract file. No concerns with BMP.		X			

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Contract Number: 78-2010-029 Applicant Name: Alton Hagans BMP: cropland conversion to grass				X	No concerns with contract file. No concerns with BMP.		X			

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Contract Number: 78-2016-801 Applicant Name: Eustice Callahan BMP: well 			X		No concerns with contract file. Corrective Action – BMP being used for purpose not intended by contract. Chemicals should be removed from the well housing and stored elsewhere.	X		Called producer and recommended that chemicals be removed from well housing to stay in compliance with program.		A copy of the letter sent to the cooperator has been received. Awaiting response from cooperator. The district should inform the division staff of the response and result.